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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to indicate the level of expressed demand for day care among low income women heading one-parent families in Cleveland and to determine the extent to which this demand is being satisfactorily fulfilled. A total of 123 low income single mothers with children under 14 years of age were contacted by telephone and interviewed using a 12-item questionnaire. Analysis of data indicated that 85 percent of the sample used day care services and a majority of the remaining 15 percent said that they would find employment if day care was available at little or no cost. Of those using day care, only 18 percent made use of day care centers and more than 33 percent used relatives as sitters. Satisfaction with day care arangements varied with type used: the use of day care centers generated the highest rate of satisfaction and the use of an unrelated sitter in the child's home was rated most frequently as unsatifactory. Alleged dissatisfaction with day care centers was based on absence of perceived benefits to the child, costs of care, day care setting and restrictions on eligibility. Satisfaction with day care centers appeared unrelated to income and day care costs. Four recommendations to meet current demand and interest in day care centers were made based on (1) the findings of the present study which indicated high need, satisfaction and preference for day care centers, and (2) a survey of the status of day care services in Cleveland. (GO)

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Day Care Arrangements Of Low Income Single Parents

by

Mary K. Tucker and Laverne C. Zell

Summer, 1975

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Clearinghouse for Research on Women and Employment

Institute of Urban Studies
Cleveland State University

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Forward

This survey of low income female heads of households was conducted by Ms. Tucker in the spring of 1974. The project was undertaken as an independent study under the supervision of Dr. Roberta Steinbacher at the Institute of Urban Studies at Cleveland State University.

Day care is an issue which is of great relevance to the employment of women. The availability of day care services is often a crucial factor in determining whether or not women can work or go to school. This is especially true in the case of single parents.

The Clearinghouse for Research on Women and Employment felt that Ms. Tucker's survey carried some important implications for the delivery of community day care services. We decided to have the study made available to people in the community who are involved in providing day care services. Data from the original survey was re-tabulated to permit more detailed analysis, and the paper was rewritten accordingly.

We are pleased to be able to present this survey as a Clearinghouse activity. It exemplifies one of the goals of the Clearinghouse: to make university resources, such as student research papers, available to the community.

Dr. Rae Rohfeld, Director
Laverne C. Zell, Assistant Director

Introduction

Little is known about the child care arrangements made by single mothers who work, go to school, or are in training programs. The consensus is that parents have trouble finding suitable child care while out of the home. Very little documentation of the extent of this need is recorded.

What is the need for child day care in the Cleveland area? Child day care, as defined by Chapter 5104 of the Ohio Revised Code, means that persons other than parents administer to the needs of infants, pre-school children and school-age children outside of school hours for any part of the twenty-four hour day. According to national estimates, one out of every three children under six will need day care at some time during his or her earliest years while the parents work.[1] The 1970 census reports that there are 170,990 children under the age of six years in Cuyahoga County,[2] indicating approximately 56,997 children that will need day care.

It is assumed that the greatest day care needs are among families with both parents working or with single heads of households. In 1970 there were 29,689 women in Cuyahoga County with children under age six who were in the labor force. Women were the heads of 11,506 families with children under age six.[3]

This study was designed to indicate the level of expressed demand for day care among low income women who are single heads of households, and

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1. Greater Cleveland Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C) Conference, May 21, 1974.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

the extent to which this demand is being satisfactorily filled. This represents only one group of day care consumers. However, the study, along with data related to eligibility and accessability, should be of practical value in planning future developments of day care services.

Methodology

The sample consisted of 123 single parent families with children under 14 who were on public assistance at the time of the study or had received some form of public assistance in the past.[4]

A random sample was obtained from the files of a local social service agency (total population of 37,399). Subjects were selected from five social districts defined by the Cuyahoga County Welfare Department: 1) Northeast, 2) Southeast, 3) Westside, 4) Hough-Euclid, and 5) Central East (see Appendix C for area boundaries).

Subjects were contacted by telephone by four female interviewers who were instructed to direct 12 questions to the subjects. (See Appendix A for questionnaire.) The Haines Address-A-Key, 1973, was used as the source of telephone numbers.

Description of the Sample

Age (Table 1) - Three-quarters of those interviewed were between the ages of 20 and 30, with the largest group aged 20-25 (42 percent). Only 7 percent were under the age of twenty, while 17 percent were over 30.

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4. The original sample consisted of 200 heads of households. Thirty-eight persons were ineligible because they did not have children under 15 or were no longer single heads of households. There was an additional sample loss of 39 persons. Twenty-two of these women either had no telephone or had unlisted phone numbers, and 17 either refused to be interviewed or were temporarily out of the home. (See Appendix B for detailed breakdown.)

5. State Disbursement Journal, March, 1974.

Income (Table 2) - Over three-quarters of the women earned less that $6,000 a year, with a little over half earning less than $4,500. Only 17 percent earned more than $6,000 per year. (Note that income was defined as total income for the family unit from any source. Thus the sample included welfare recipients receiving Aid to Dependent Children, women who were entirely self-supporting, and women who received only supplemental payments.)

Number of Children (Table 3) - The majority of the women surveyed had only one or two children (70 percent). Nineteen percent had three children, and only 11 percent had four or more children. There was a total of 263 children, averaging 2.1 children per women.

Age of Children (Table 4) - Nearly three-quarters of the children were seven or under, with half of the sample aged four or under.

TABLE 1: Ages of Women Interviewed

Age	Number	Percent
Under 20	9	7.3%
20 - 25	52	42.3%
25 - 30	40	32.5%
30 - 35	13	10.6%
35 - 40	8	6.5%
Over 40	1	.8%
TOTAL	123	100.0%

TABLE 2: Income of Women Interviewed

	Number	Percent
Under $3,000	33	26.8%
$3,000 - $4,500	31	25.2%
$4,500 - $6,000	32	26.0%
$6,000 - $7,500	12	9.8%
$7,500 and over	9	7.3%
No answer	6	4.9%
TOTAL	123	100.0%

TABLE 3: Number of Children

Number of Children	Number	Percent
1	48	39.0%
2	38	30.9%
3	23	18.7%
4	6	4.9%
5	3	2.4%
6	4	3.3%
7	1	.8%
TOTAL	123	100.0%

TABLE 4: Age of Children

Age	Number	Percent
Under 1	6	2.3%
1	26	9.9%
2	36	13.7%
3	30	11.4%
4	32	12.2%
5	24	9.1%
6	21	8.0%
7	18	6.8%
8	13	4.9%
9	13	4.9%
10	10	3.8%
11	7	2.7%
12	11	4.2%
13	9	3.4%
14	7	2.7%
TOTAL	263	100.0%

Findings

Need for Day Care

Only 15 percent of the women surveyed indicated that they were homemakers and did not use some kind of day care. Thus, 85 percent of the sample used day care services at the time of the survey.

As indicated in the table below, over half of the women interviewed were employed, and the vast majority of these employed women were working full-time. Another 25 percent were enrolled in school or in a training program.

Of the 19 homemakers, 14 (or 74 percent) indicated that they would go to school or find a job if day care was available at little or no cost.

Thus there was a high level of demand for day care among this group of lower income women who were single heads of households.

TABLE 5: Occupations of Women Interviewed

	Number	Percent
Employed	67	54.5%
Full-time	60	48.8%
Part-time	7	5.7%
Going to School	23	18.7%
Housewife	19	15.4%
Enrolled in Training Program	6	4.9%
School and Work	5	4.1%
Other	3	2.4%
TOTAL	123	100.0%

Type of Day care Arrangements

As stated above, 104 women (or 85 percent of the sample) used some form of day care. The table below shows the types of day care arrangements that were used.

In three-quarters of the cases, day care took place in a private home (either the child's or the sitter's). More than a third of the women used relatives as sitters (37 percent). Only 19 women (18 percent) made use of day care centers.

TABLE 6: Present Day Care Arrangements

	Number	Percent
In Child's Home	28	27.0%
by Relative	15	14.4%
by Non-relative	10	9.6%
by Older Sibling	3	2.9%
In Sitter's Home	49	47.1%
by Relative	23	22.1%
by Non-relative	26	25.0%
Day Care Center	19	18.3%
Other	7	6.7%
No answer	1	1.0%
TOTAL	104	100.0%

Note: Sample does not include housewives.

Satisfaction with Day Care Arrangements

The 104 women who used day care were divided equally regarding satisfaction with their present day care arrangements. Fifty women expressed satisfaction with their present arrangements, 50 expressed dissatisfaction, and four were undecided.

Satisfaction varied greatly with different types of day care arrangements, only two of the five types of arrangements were satisfactory to more than half of the women who used them. Day care centers generated the highest rate of satisfaction, with 84 percent of the women who used centers being satisfied. A much smaller proportion of those women who arranged for day care at the home of a relative were satisfied (57 percent).

The most unsatisfactory arrangement was the use of an unrelated sitter in the child's home (90 percent dissatisfied). Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of the women who arranged for day care in the home of an unrelated person were dissatisfied. Women were split regarding the use of a relative in the child's home--50 percent were satisfied and 50 percent were dissatisfied.

In general, women were more satisfied with a relative as a sitter than a non-relative, and more were satisfied when day care took place at the sitter's home than in the child's home.

TABLE 7: Satisfaction with Present Day Care Arrangement

	Total	Satisfied	%	Dissatisfied	%	Undecided	%
In Child's Home	28	10	35.7%	18	64.3%	--	--
by Relative	18	9	50.0%	9	50.0%	--	--
by Non-relative	10	1	10.0%	9	90.0%	--	--
In Sitter's Home	49	21	42.9%	27	55.1%	1	2.0%
by Relative	23	13	56.5%	10	43.5%	--	--
by Non-relative	26	8	30.8%	17	65.4%	1	3.8%
Day Care Center	19	16	84.2%	2	10.5%	1	5.3%
Other	7	3	42.9%	2	28.6%	2	28.6%
No Answer	1	--	--	1	100.0%	--	--
TOTAL	104	50	48.1%	50	48.1%	4	3.8%

Note: Columns may not add to totals due to rounding.

Preference

Two-thirds of the 50 dissatisfied women stated that they would prefer a day care center. Twenty-four percent preferred a day care aide, while only eight percent preferred a day care home. It would seem that day care centers are popular not only with those who use them, but also among women who presently have other arrangements.

Factors in Dissatisfaction

Those who were dissatisfied gave the following reasons: (a) parent did not feel that the child was benefiting educationally, socially, and emotionally as expected, (b) day care costs were too high, (c) the day care setting was not satisfactory, and (d) there were too many restrictions to continue to be eligible for day care services through a public social service agency.

Income did not differ significantly between the satisfied and dissatisfied groups. However, day care costs were much higher for the dissatisfied group. More than one-third of the satisfied women received day care services at no cost, compared to only ten percent of the dissatisfied women. Higher day care costs then could account for much dissatisfaction.

Cost of day care, however, does not appear to be a major factor in satisfaction with day care centers. While six of the 16 women who were satisfied with day care centers received services at no cost through County Welfare, half (or eight women) paid $21 or more each week. The high rate of satisfaction with day care centers may be a result of factors such as educational value, convenience, and reliability (i.e., in contrast with private sitters who can be late or sick).

TABLE 8: Income of Satisfied and Dissatisfied Groups

	Dissatisfied	Percent	Satisfied	Percent
Under $3,000	16	32.0%	12	24.0%
$3,000 - $4,500	10	20.0%	10	20.0%
$4,500 - $6,000	15	30.0%	14	28.0%
$6,000 - $7,500	4	8.0%	7	14.0%
$7,500 and over	4	8.0%	5	10.0%
No answer	1	2.0%	2	4.0%
Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%

TABLE 9: Costs of Day Care

	Dissatisfied	Percent	Satisfied	Percent
No cost	5	10.0%	18	36.0%
$10 or less	3	6.0%	4	8.0%
$11 - $15	9	18.0%	8	16.0%
$16 - $20	17	34.0%	6	12.0%
$21 - $25	6	12.0%	8	16.0%
$26 - $30	5	10.0%	3	6.0%
$31 or more	3	6.0%	2	4.0%
No answer	2	4.0%	1	2.0%
TOTAL	50	100.0%	50	100.0%

Note: Columns may not add up to totals due to rounding.

TABLE 10: Costs of Day Care Centers

Cost	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Free	6	0
$10 or less	0	0
$11 - $15	1	1
$16 - $20	1	0
$21 - $25	6	0
$26 - $30	1	1
$31 or more	1	1
	16	2

Current Status of Day Care Services in Cleveland

As of January 1, 1975, the following numbers of Cleveland area day care facilities were contracted with the Cuyahoga County Welfare Department: 68 licensed day care centers (including nine centers under the auspices of the Day Nursery Association), 403 day care homes (including 20 DNA homes), and 87 day care aides.

The day care centers were capable of handling 1,300 children, and the day care homes 1,156. The number of children that can be cared for by day care aides depends on the size of the individual families.

A listing of day care facilities in Cuyahoga County was made available

at the Greater Cleveland Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C) Conference (Day Care...Do We care?, May 21, 1974). This list, shown below, includes both day care facilities that are contracted with County Welfare and those that are not.

TABLE 11: Licensed Day Care Centers in Cuyahoga County, 1974

	Full Time Slots	Part Time Slots
Public Centers (state or local government sponsored; full tax supported)	590	244
Voluntary Centers (non-governmental, non-profit; sponsored by social agencies, churches, etc.)	2,235	2,017
Independent (proprietary, for financial profit)	3,096	784
	5,921	3,045

Source: Greater Cleveland Community Child Care (4-C) Conference, May 21, 1974. Day Care...Do We Care?

TABLE 12: Licensed Day Care Homes in Cuyahoga County, 1974

	Number of Homes	Capacity
Center for Human Services (federally funded; parents must meet income requirements and live within service areas)	20	76
Children's Services (funded by United Torch Services; parents pay fees with some supplemental assistance available)	79	149
Cuyahoga County Welfare Department (care is purchased with public funds from providers on a contract basis)	figures not available	1,202
Total Capacity		1,427

Source: Greater Cleveland Community Child Care (4-C) Conference, May 21, 1974. Day Care...Do We Care?

Adequacy of Current Day Care Facilities

As stated earlier, in 1970 there were 29,689 women with children under age 6 who were in the labor force in Cuyahoga County. Using a minimum figure of one child per women, this indicates a need for day care for at least 30,000 children under age 6. (The actual need for day care is probably higher because these figures do not reflect the needs of parents attending school or otherwise occupied during the day. In addition, there are probably more mothers with young children in the work force now than was the case in 1970, as the labor force participation of this group has increased rapidly in the last decade.[5]) According to 4-C figures (Tables 11 and 12), there are approximately 10,000 full and part-time slots in both day care centers and day care homes in the county. Thus, only one-third of these children under 6 with employed mothers can be accommodated by day care centers and homes. This lack of facilities is compounded by the fact that day care facilities are not evenly distributed throughout Cleveland. That is, some areas of the city may not have any facilities. Families with limited time and without means of transportation then, are sometimes not able to use available centers.

Summary and Conclusions

There was a high need for day care services among the women interviewed, with 85 percent of the sample using some form of day care

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6. Women's Bureau, Employment Standards Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. "Day Care Facts," Pamphlet 16 (Rev.), 1973.

at the time of the study. Three-quarters of the 19 homemakers indicated that they, too, would go to school or work if day care was available at little or no cost. It would seem then, that a very high proportion of low income women who are single heads of households need day care.

The findings dispel many myths about 'welfare mothers.' Over half of the women were employed, and over one-quarter were enrolled in school or in training programs. Fourteen more women would work or study if low cost child care were available. It appears that women who need public assistance at some time in their lives make every effort to become employed and self-sufficient.

Nearly half of the women were not satisfied with their present day care arrangements. Only day care centers proved satisfactory to the vast majority of women who used them. In addition, two-thirds of the dissatisfied group stated that they would prefer day care centers. The preference of day care centers should be kept in mind by day care policy makers.

Recommendations

There were two outstanding findings in this study: 1) There is a high need for day care among low income single heads of households, and 2) there is high satisfaction with and preference for day care centers. Keeping these points in mind, the following recommendations are offered as a means of reducing or solving the problem of inadequate day care facilities in Cleveland:

1) The community should formulate public policies on the responsibility for and support of day care services.

2) Increase the number of day care centers to meet the present and future demands for such services.

3) Institute child care job training programs for adults who will be caring for children to increase satisfaction with day care arrangements.

4) Educate the consumers of day care (parents) on how to evaluate child care arrangements, to press for quality day day care, and to establish cooperative day care arrangements in their neighborhoods.

The following research is also recommended:

1) Identify geographical areas which are severly lacking in day care facilities.

2) Identify the day care arrangements made for older children during times when school is not in session, the satisfaction with such arrangements, and the alternatives which could be made available.

3) Identify means of providing low-cost quality day care (e.g., cooperative day care centers which are run by parents and require only low levels of outside support).

4) Identify sources of funding for day care and means of obtaining this funding.

5) Determine ways in which parents can become more involved in planning and implementing day care programs.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

Do you have children under 15 years of age? ( ) Yes ( ) No

If yes, what are their ages? Circle ages:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

What is your present activity? ( ) Going to school ( ) Employed ( ) FT ( ) PT

( ) Homemaker ( ) In a training program ( ) Other_____

What kind of day care arrangements do you have now? Check appropriate box:

( ) Children stay at home of a relative.
( ) Children stay at the home of a neighbor or sitter not related.
( ) Cared for by husband.
( ) Child stays by himself.
( ) Child is in a day care center.
( ) Child is cared for by an older sister or brother.
( ) Child stays home and is cared for by a relative.
( ) Child stays home and is cared for by a sitter.
( ) Other_____.

Are you satisfied with your present arrangements?

What is your total cost of day care per week? $_____.

If employed, what kind of work do you perform? ( ) Clerical ( ) Secretarial
( ) Domestic ( ) Professional ( ) Other_____.

What is your income bracket?

( ) Under $3,000
( ) $3,000 to $4,500
( ) $4,500 to $6,000
( ) $6,000 to $7,500
( ) Over $7,500

What is your age group?

( ) Under 20 years
( ) 20 to 25 years
( ) 25 to 30 years
( ) 30 to 35 years
( ) 35 to 40 years
( ) Over 40 years

APPENDIX A (con't)

IF PARENT IS HOME WITH CHILDREN: If day care was made available to you at a small charge or no charge, would you go to school or find a job? _____

Would you prefer a Day Care Home_____, Day Care Aide, or a Day Care Center_____?

Did you know that persons on public assistance, or who have been on public assistance may qualify for day care services through County Welfare?

( ) Yes ( ) No

APPENDIX B

Sampling Frame
Screening and Sample Loss

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200 ATTEMPTED CONTACTS WITH HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

Ineligible for sample: Subjects did not meet the criteria for the sample:

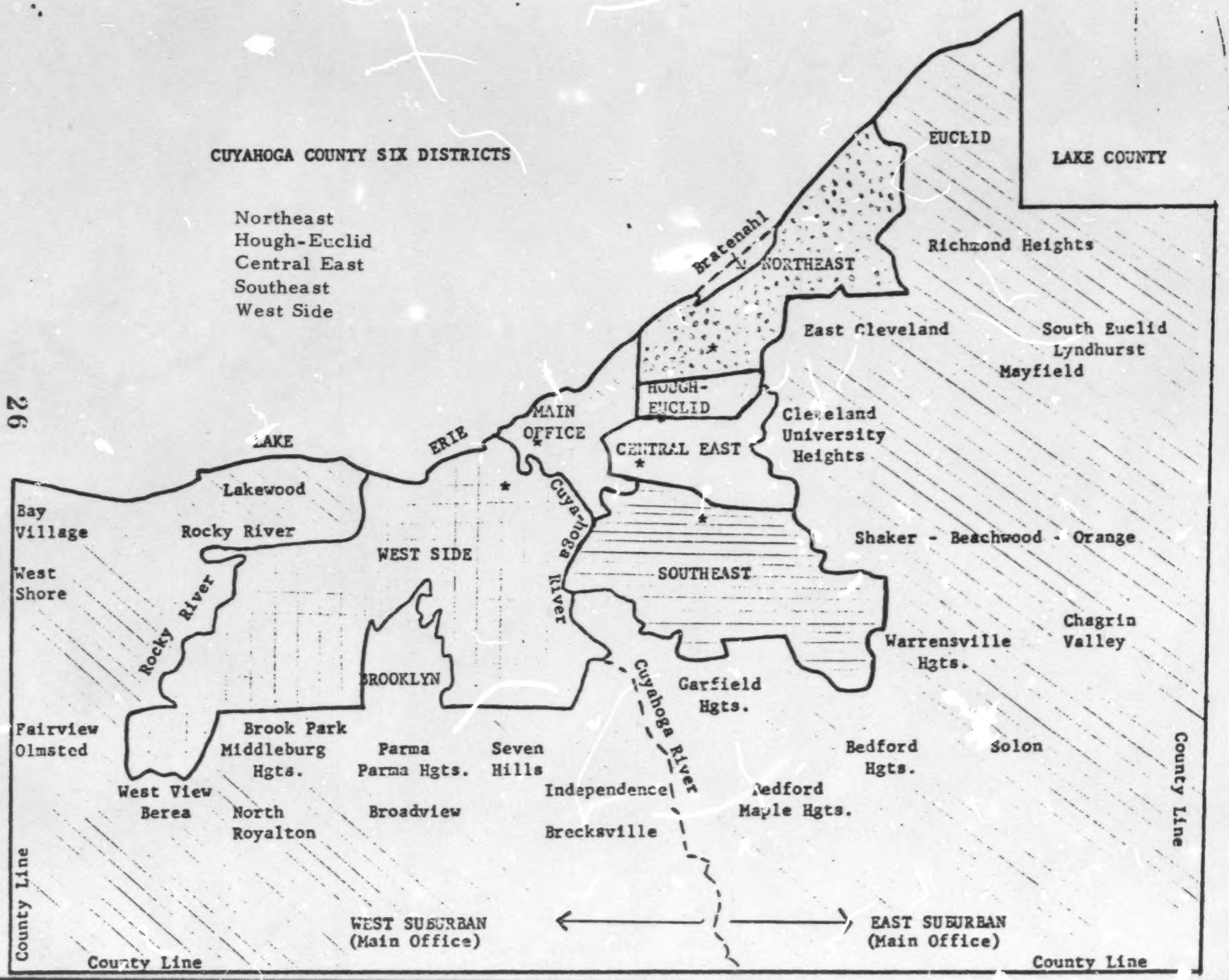
16	No children in the household
12	No children under 15 years of age
10	No need for day care services
38	

162 Eligible for the sample: Subjects work with children under 15 years of age with or without child care arrangements.

Sample Loss:

22	Unable to contact by telephone--unlisted or disconnected service
16	Refused to be interviewed
1	Parent out of home for medical reasons
39	

123 SAMPLE INTERVIEWED: Completed data on questionnaires


CUYAHOGA COUNTY SIX DISTRICTS
Northeast
Hough-Euclid
Central East
Southeast
West Side
EUCLID
LAKE COUNTY
Bratenahl
NORTHEAST
Richmond Heights
East Cleveland
South Euclid
Lyndhurst
Mayfield
HOUGH-
EUCLID
MAIN
OFFICE
CENTRAL EAST
Cleveland
University
Heights
LAKE
ERIE
Lakewood
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Rocky River
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Shaker - Beachwood - Orange
West
Shore
Rocky River
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